

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SEOUL 07978 050943Z

15

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

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FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9857

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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CINCPAC

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: SPON, PFOR, US KS, KN

SUBJ: ROK MEDIA REACTION TO SECSTATE'S SPEECH

BEGIN SUMMARY: SECSTATE'S UNGA SPEECH ON KOREA WAS GIVEN PROMINENT COVERAGE IN ROK NEWSPAPERS. EDITORIALS UNIFORMLY WELCOMED PROPOSAL BUT TOOK WAIT-AND-SEE ATTITUDE ABOUT FUTURE, HOLDING IT UNLIKELY NORTH WOULD ACCEPT SOON. END SUMMARY.

1. ON OCTOBER 1, KOREAN PRESS CARRIED ON FRONT PAGES STORIES OF SECRETARY KISSINGER'S SEPTEMBER 30 SPEECH AT UNGA AGAIN PROPOSING FOUR-WAY TALKS ON KOREA. VIRTUALLY ALL NEWSPAPERS GAVE FULL TEXT OF PORTION OF SPEECH DEALING WITH KOREA AND RAN COMMENT OF SPOKESMAN FOR ROK MOFA HOPING THAT NORTH KOREA (NK) AND OTHER PARTIES WOULD REACT POSITIVELY. OTHER STORIES REPORTED THAT UN DIPLOMATS FROM WESTERN AND SOME NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES WELCOMED SPEECH AS VERY CONSTRUCTIVE AND BALANCED," WHILE COMMUNISTS SAID IT WAS "NOTHING NEW."

2. ON OCTOBER 2, PRESS GAVE FRONTPAGE TREATMENT TO ORIENT
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PRESS STORY FROM WASHINGTON THAT PRC HAD PROMISED TO SUPPORT

SECSTATE'S PROPOSAL TO OPEN TALKS ON KOREA IN THREE STAGES.

3. EDITORIAL COMMENT ON ABOVE EVENTS APPEARED OVER OCT. 2-3 WEEKEND AND AGAIN OCTOBER 4. IT UNIVERSALLY TERMED SECSTATE'S PROPOSAL "REALISTIC, PRACTICAL, AND IMPORTANT." EDITORIALS EMPHASIZED WITH APPROVAL THAT SPEECH WAS A DEFINITE REJECTION OF DIRECT US-NK TALKS SOUGHT BY NORTH, A POINT ON WHICH THERE HAD BEEN MINOR EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN AFTER WITHDRAWAL OF NK HOSTILE UN RESOLUTION. PAPERS OPINED IT UNLIKELY NK WOULD ACCEPT TALKS NOW BUT SAID NK WOULD BE FORCED TO "SOMEDAY". KYONGHYANG SHINMUN NOTED PROPOSAL HAD "GIVEN REALISTIC FLEXIBILITY TO PRC TO EXERCISE ITS INFLUENTIAL POWER OVER NK FREELY." STERN

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